



Activities for Fine Motor Development

Dear Families,

Early play activities such as those that involve your child manipulating toys and objects help to develop fine motor coordination. Good hand function requires a stable trunk (body) so the arms and hands can move freely away from the body. Therefore activities which develop trunk muscles can also improve fine motor skills (e.g. scissor skills, pencil control and using and manipulating small toys such as Legos). Activities which promote good hand strength and skill are often found in everyday tasks. Listed below are some great activities to help strengthen small motor muscles in your child's hands. These activities will help make writing, cutting and other activities easier for your child to do in school.

Try to make your child as independent as possible. Please do not complete tasks for him/her, including such daily requirements as cutting food, dressing, tying shoelaces, etc. Instead, be there to assist your child as he/she completes the task.

Please keep these activities fun and integrate them into your daily activities.



1. Paint, draw, color, etc...on a vertical surface (use an easel, chalkboard, mounted clipboard, etc.)
2. Pick up and sort small objects such as marbles, coins, cotton balls, straws, seeds, buttons, etc... and place them in containers
3. Pick up objects using various sized tongs
4. Screw and unscrew objects such as nuts and bolts, caps from jars, etc...
5. String beads onto a shoelace or pipe cleaner
6. Use scissors to cut straight & curved lines/shapes drawn on paper, cloth, etc...
7. Tear newspaper into strips, then crumble paper into a small ball and then flick it with your finger (play "soccer")
8. Shuffle cards, deal cards one by one, turn cards over, stack them in a pile
9. Fasten buttons, zippers and hooks
10. Tie shoelaces
11. Play with Playdough - rolling, squeezing, and smashing
12. Manually sharpen pencils
13. Use spray bottles filled with water to water plants
14. Put rubber bands on various sized containers
15. Trace and write letters & numbers
16. Use stencils, connect the dots activity sheets, and mazes
17. Complete puzzles
18. Use a turkey baster to squeeze out paint to make pictures, or in the bath to squirt water
19. Everyday tasks such as carrying, pushing, pulling such things as boxes, blocks, toys, wagons, etc... are excellent natural muscle building activities.



Please turn over ... →



20. Help in the kitchen with scrubbing and peeling vegetables, tearing lettuce, rolling pizza dough, using cookie cutters, using fingers to put sprinkles on cupcakes, etc...
21. Help in the garden with pushing a wheel barrow, raking, digging, etc...
22. Color using the flat side of a crayon. Put paper over leaves, stencils, and other objects so that the child gets sensory feedback as he/she colors. (rubblings)
23. Move water from one container to another with a eye dropper
24. Use scissors to cut pictures out of a magazine and paste them into a collage
25. Spinning tops and playing jacks
26. Roll dice within cupped hands
27. Make jewelry from stringing macaroni, buttons, etc...
28. Paint pictures with a Q-Tip
29. Make pictures using stickers or ink stamps
30. Play with finger puppets



Attached to this list are some connect the dot activity sheets, tracing activities, cutting activities, and a recipe for homemade Playdough.

Many skills are required to develop an efficient pencil grasp. These include the ability to move fingers in isolation of each other, adequate hand muscle strength, and good wrist stability. These qualities are very important when learning to print and handwrite. The most commonly seen efficient pencil grasp is called a "Tripod" pencil grasp which is made by holding the pencil with the thumb, index, and middle fingers. Please refer to the picture of this efficient pencil grasp.



Some of these activities might be difficult at first, but do not worry...it will get easier with practice. Please remember to integrate these activities into your everyday activities and have fun!

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.



Have fun!

Sincerely,
Dunning Kindergarten Teachers

Homemade Playdough Recipe



2 cups flour
1 cup salt
2 cups water
2 tablespoons baby oil (works better than regular oil and smells better!)
2 tablespoons cream of tartar
liquid food coloring

Combine all dry ingredients. Add the water and oil. Stir well. Microwave on high for 4-5 minutes. Stir again. Microwave for another minute. Stir. Continue to microwave for one more minute, and then stir until the dough is the consistency of mashed potatoes. Cool it enough to touch. Knead in the food coloring until the dough is the desired color. Store it in an air-tight container or zipper top bag.

Homemade Goo



1 cup starch
food coloring

Add water until it is the desired consistency.

It's wet, but it has a dry feeling. It is fun for all ages! Kids love the texture. Put newspaper down, and let kids drizzle it into designs.

